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outline of moral obligation ; in their poetry we find the highest excellence ; and in their ethical aphorisms a body of the soundest practical wisdom. There are deeper obligations which we owe to the Jews. Christianity was originally founded, professed, and propagated by them. There are glories yet in store for that people. Their history is yet to be eventful. There is a bright light resting on the future—a haven across the melancholy seas—a haven they must reach at last. All history is something more than a record of facts. The facts of history are connected ; and to trace and expound the principles of this connexion, to exhibit history as one organic whole, is the highest office of the historian. Nowhere is this connexion better seen than in the annals of Judaism.

According to the most recent and exact statistics, the Jews number at this moment very nearly the same as when they left Egypt under Moses—somewhere about three millions and

a half. They have used every dialect, have wandered on the banks of the Nile, by the waters of Babylon, the Jordan, the Tiber, the Thames, the Mississippi ; they have mingled but never united with other nations ; arms, climate, genius, politics, cannot explain it, we turn to our own records to find out the cause—their history is prospective as well as retrospective, and leads us forward to a time when their wanderings shall be over, and they shall recognise in Him whom they now reject the brightness and glory of their race.

There is evident purpose in the preservation of the Jews. We disregard the idle curl of the wave, but when every wave is moving in the same direction, when the tide is clearly seen at work—we find a law of nature, we seek a cause and find it in the skies. So it is with all history—but more especially in Jewish records, old and new—there is design in them all—every circumstance is connected—it is no chapter of accidents, but the development of a great and glorious plan.



THE HEBREW CAPTIVES.

## LORD WILLIAM RUSSELL.

ON Friday, the 20th day of July, 1683, there was a wild, open space, consisting of green fields, some trees, and skirted by a few buildings, in which young gentlemen acquired the art and mystery of the law, where the smoky square, with its rusty railings, its stunted shrubs and yellow grass, and its black, dreary houses, now lies in the heart of London, so completely shut in that if a stranger once finds himself within it, little else than the guidance of a native can extricate him from the labyrinth of lanes and alleys which alone lead to the great thoroughfares. It was then called Lincoln's Inn-fields, and though the fields are long since departed, the appellation still remains. Well, in these fields, on that summer day, one hundred and sixty-six years ago, a great crowd assembled around a wooden scaffold erected in the midst, and covered with black cloth. There were the sheriffs upon it, and a

block, and an axe, and a headsman, and a victim—tall, dignified, pale, but tranquil, and dressed in mourning. This was Lord William Russell, and he was about to suffer death, the king and the court, and the judges and the jury, said for high treason. History and posterity say that that it was for defending English liberty, and the world knows which to believe.

Let us see how it happened. Charles II. was not long restored to the throne which his father had lost, when troubles and discontents began to break out afresh. The king had all the leaning towards arbitrary power, the love of ease and enjoyment at any cost, the disregard of popular rights and the profound faith in the principle of legitimacy, which distinguished and ruined his race. He therefore speedily commenced the same attacks upon the constitution of the kingdom which had brought his father to the scaffold. The great object

The parliament which was dissolved in May, 1679, passed one measure at least which must for ever entitle it to the grateful remembrance of every Englishman, and every American as well—the Habeas Corpus Act. Previous to this, although it was a generally acknowledged legal maxim that every man accused of committing a breach of the law should be brought

This parliament also freed the English press. Previous to the great Revolution, all printers were liable to punishment by the Star Chamber, for transgressing the laws and regulations which they laid down, and which, with a refinement of despotism, were never made known, and, perhaps, never existed, until some unfortunate publisher had incurred their anger. He was then pilloried, or whipped, or branded, or had his



LORD WILLIAM RUSSELL.

ears cut off, or his nose slit, or was hanged, according to the magnitude of his offence, or the wrath of his judges. This court, it will be believed, was never popular with the parliament or the people. Accordingly it was a standing grievance in every petition and remonstrance addressed to the king, during the struggles which preceded the Revolution. After that event it fell with the throne. Milton then addressed to the Long Parliament that eloquent protest against all restrictions on the liberty of the press, which alone, were it the only one of his productions which had come down to us, would be

sufficient to place him in the front rank of English authors and philosophers. Independently of its rich and vigorous style, it is full of thoughts, of which few men in that day knew anything,—broad and sound ideas of liberty and good government, which slumbered on our library shelves for one hundred years or more after the blind old man who conceived them had been resting in his grave, and which have only within the latter part of the present half-century started into life and action. But Milton was not able to make the world beat time to the throbbings of his own great heart: The essay on the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing was written for another age than his. The parliament did not heed him. It abolished the Star Chamber, to be sure, but established a censorship in its stead, and by this the printers and authors were kept in bounds until the year 1679.

In the passing of these two measures, as in that of all others of a like nature, William, Lord Russell bore a prominent part. He was born in 1641, and during the greater part of his youth led a wild and dissipated life. In 1667 he married Rachel Wriothesley, daughter of the Earl of Southampton. He sat in the second and three following parliaments after the Restoration. He was a scion of the noble house of Russell, which first appears in English history in the person of a country gentleman named Sir John Russell, to whom Henry VIII. took a great fancy, and enriched him with some of the confiscated lands of the monasteries. By a series of services to the state, and aided by uniform good fortune, the family rose step by step to the dignity of Earls of Bedford, which they now held in the reign of Charles II. They had ever been distinguished by their attachment to the popular, or, as it was now for the first time called, the Whig party, and were amongst the staunchest adherents of the constitution of the kingdom, the bitterest opponents of the doctrine of non-resistance and of arbitrary power, and the deepest haters of Popery. They had consequently viewed with great alarm the king's leaning to the church which on the continent had winked at his follies, consoled his misfortunes, and had always presented itself to his mind as the the inculcator of a gentlemanly creed—the creed of courts and people of quality. But he at least was outwardly and professedly a Protestant, and would doubtless remain so during his lifetime. Not so his brother, the Duke of York, who was the heir-apparent to the throne. It was one of Charles's misfortunes that, although according to a standing joke of the time, he was the father of a large number of his subjects, not one of his children had entered the world with the sanction or approval of the church, or of that portion of the public whose notions of morality were not of the laxest description. His wife was childless, and in all human probability his brother was destined to succeed him, and this brother was a rigid and devout Roman Catholic.

When it became quite clear that the king was not likely to have any legitimate issue, the kingdom was in a blaze. The old Tories and country gentlemen were in a sad dilemma, wavering between their love of the Protestant church and their devotion to legitimacy, but in most instances the latter triumphed. The Whigs, on the contrary, entered upon the contest against the succession of the Duke of York with an ardour worthy of the old days of the Long Parliament, and introduced into the House of Commons the famous Exclusion Bill, so called from its depriving him of his hereditary title to the throne. The excitement which now arose over all the kingdom was tremendous. Every hamlet, town, corporation, counting-house, coffee-house, pot-house, and school in the kingdom contained two parties, Exclusionists and Non-Exclusionists. It was sought to be proved that the king had been privately married to his mistress, Lucy Walters, and that therefore his son, the young, handsome, brave, popular Duke of Monmouth, was the heir to the throne. The Pope was burnt in effigy, and Pope Joan was produced on the stage.

Parliament met again in 1680. The Exclusion Bill was again introduced, and passed the Commons readily. Lord William Russell carried it up to the Lords, and thus drew upon him the hatred of the court party, and above all of the Duke of York, who hated, as a superstitious bigot always hates,—to the death. The debate in the House of Lords was

loud and long. The peers poured out vituperation fiercely as quarrelsome coal-heavers. They sprang to their feet and clapped their hands to their swords, as in the terrible days of the Long Parliament. The king was present, smiled upon his friends, and marked his enemies, and dissolved parliament once more. The next he summoned to meet at Oxford, fearing that if matters came to a crisis the London train-bands might once again, as they had done before, decide the quarrel in a summary manner. "The session at Oxford," Macaulay says, "resembled a Polish diet rather than an English parliament." The Whigs repaired to the place of meeting on horseback, surrounded by their retainers all armed, the latter scowling fiercely on the royal guards; one blow struck in anger, and the civil war was begun. The Exclusion Bill was still insisted upon, but to this the king steadfastly refused his assent. Anything but this he would grant, but this he would not grant, and once again dissolved parliament.

A re-action now set in amongst the middle classes especially. The king had so far kept within the bounds of the law. A large part of the legislature supported him. He had a small standing army on his side. The Duke of York's leaning to arbitrary power and Popery were well known; but the multitude, always changeable, at length began to think that after all this was not a sufficient reason for taking away his rights beforehand—that sufficient for the day was the evil thereof—and that in any case, in supporting his brother the king was only doing his duty. But history has shown us the wisdom of the Whigs, and the folly of the multitude. Russell and Sydney foresaw in 1680 the events of 1688. Had the Exclusion Bill been passed, the Duke of York might have gratified and carried out his religious views to any extent he pleased in private. The Stuart family might have been still on the throne, and the battles of the Boyne, and of Aughrim, would never have been fought, nor Limerick nor Derry ever besieged, nor Ireland desolated for a whole century by laws which disgraced the English statute-book, and which even now History blushes to record. This change in the public feeling, however, enabled the king to strike at the Whig leaders, who, in these evil days abandoned by the masses, were for the time the sole champions of English freedom, and he followed up his advantage with terrible rigour.

He proceeded to annul or revoke all the charters of corporations which he supposed to be unfavourable to the Duke of York, and a number of other arbitrary acts which we cannot in our limited space attempt to give in detail. At last the Whigs were driven to the construction of the celebrated Rye-house plot, so called from a house on the road to Newmarket, where it was said the conspirators formed the design of killing the king and the duke. Many people are of opinion that the plot never existed save in the imaginations of the court party; but there can be little doubt that the great Whig leaders did project an insurrection, to break out simultaneously at York, Chester, and the other great towns, the object of which was to overthrow the government. Some of the most fanatical even went so far as to propose a general butchery of their opponents, but these designs were never mentioned in the presence of Russell or Sydney, and no higher tribute than this could be paid to these great men. Two informers swore to a knowledge of the conspiracy, and the king immediately issued a proclamation for the apprehension of a crowd of Whigs. Shortly afterwards Lord Howard of Esrick, surrendered himself, and upon his information warrants for high treason were issued against the Earl of Essex and Lord William Russell. Algernon Sydney, an old soldier of the parliament, was also seized, and met his fate soon after Russell.

But against Russell it was that the court was most incensed, because he it was who proposed the Exclusion Bill in the House of Commons, and carried it up to the Lords. He was tried on the 12th of July, at Old Bailey, before eight judges. He was very urgent for one day longer for his trial, because he was expecting witnesses who might arrive before night. But this was refused. He then asked for a postponement until the afternoon, but this also was denied him, and the proceedings begun. He pleaded not guilty. Three witnesses were examined against him, no one of whom proved anything

amounting to a charge of high treason; but according to the odious doctrine of constructive treason, which was often put into practice in those arbitrary times, the evidence of all three put together was held sufficient to condemn him. It may give some idea of the spirit which animated his prosecutors, when we mention that words spoken in his presence merely by others, were proffered and received as valid proof of his intentions.

When all the evidence had been gone through, the accused called persons of standing and repute to speak to his character. Dr. Burnet testified to his loyalty and integrity—so did Lord Cavendish; Dr. Tillotson, thought him "a person of great virtue and integrity;" Dr. Cox said "he often had occasion to speak with my Lord Russell in private, and having been himself against all risings, or anything that tended to the disorder of the public, he had heard my Lord Russell profess solemnly that it would ruin the best cause in the world to take any of these irregular ways of preserving it." The Duke of Somerset "had known him for two years, and had been often in his company, and had never heard anything from him but what was very honourable, loyal, and just." Several other noblemen and divines testified to the same effect.

Then Russell himself was asked what he had to say. He denied that he wished to bring about a rebellion, declared that he was loyal as any man, and that in any changes which he advocated he desired only the aid of parliament and of the laws, told the jury that his life and honour were in their hands, and prayed God to direct them. In the afternoon he was found guilty. On Saturday, the 14th July, he was placed at the bar, and sentence of death pronounced upon him, in the disgusting formula which to this day English judges are compelled to employ in similar cases—which happily are now of rare occurrence. The last is doubtless in the recollection of all our readers—that of Mr. Smith O'Brien and the unfortunate Young Irelanders, in the autumn of 1848.

Bishop Burnet attended him in his last hours. This divine was one of a race of churchmen, which now seem almost if not quite extinct, who never remained quiet and impassive in the presence of a great abuse, never swam with the stream because the it was strong and flowed on to dignity and ease, but buffeted bravely, cried aloud, and spared not. They never abandoned a good cause in evil days, but, like the mighty men whose successors they are supposed to have been, they maintained liberty at all hazards, against thrones, and principalities, and powers. All honour to those old English churchmen! They were worthy of the good old cause for which they battled—the cause for which "Sydney died on the scaffold, and Hampden died on the field."

Burnet has written a history of his own times, in which he describes the last hours of Lord Russell's life with that quaint minuteness for which old writers, and particularly old divines, are remarkable. By him we are told that all possible means were used to save his life; that his father, the Earl of Bedford, offered the king one hundred thousand pounds if he would grant a pardon. The exchequer was well nigh empty, but the pardon was refused. Money without measure was offered to Lady Portsmouth, Charles's mistress; Lady Russell went on her knees before the Duchess of York; Lord Russell himself, at the earnest solicitation of his friends, offered to live abroad for the remainder of his days, and never more to meddle in English affairs. But all was in vain. "What!" said the king, "shall I grant him his life who would not grant me six hours?" The Duke of York, it is said, was even anxious that he should be executed in South-ampton-square, before his own house; but this Charles would not hear of.

Russell was throughout calm and cheerful, equal to either fortune, and triumphed over death. He read the warrant for his execution with indifference, and conversed with great liveliness after the sheriffs had left the room. The day before his death his nose began to bleed. "I shall not," said he to Burnet, "let blood to divert this; that will be done to-morrow." It rained hard during the night, which, he said, was a pity, for

it would spoil a great show on the morrow. He hoped God had forgiven the sins of his early youth: he had for many years walked before him with a sincere heart. If he had committed errors, they were errors of the understanding, and in aught that he did he had no private end of his own. He was still of opinion that the king was limited by law, and that when he broke through those limits, his subjects might defend themselves, and restrain him.\* He thought a violent death was a very desirable way of ending one's life; it was only the being exposed to be a little gazed at, and to suffer the pain of one minute, which he was confident was not equal to the pain of drawing a tooth. He said he felt none of those transports which some good people feel, but he had a full calm in his mind. He was much concerned at the cloud that seemed to be then hanging over his country, but he hoped his death would do more service than his life could have done. That there might be no mistake about his political principles, he drew out a statement of them, which he handed to the sheriffs on the scaffold. They are those which every man now recognises as the law and constitution of England. He received the sacrament from Tillotson, the day before his death, with much devotion, and in the evening took leave of his wife and children. The parting with Lady Russell was one of the finest scenes in English history. This heroic woman had stood by his side in court, during the appalling agony of a trial for high treason under the Stuarts—took notes, comforted and consoled him. After sentence was passed, she toiled night and day to procure a remission of it. And now, when hope on this side the grave was gone, the most terrible ordeal still remained. She knew it was for her husband's honour, his peace of mind, his name and memory, and the cause for which he had laboured, that he should die like a brave man, calm, confident, and hopeful, superior to the malice of his enemies, and, prophet-like, should look beyond the bars of his dungeon, the axe and block, to the triumph of liberty and of right. And when they met, she suppressed her woman's feelings, and spoke calmly, and then in silence embraced him for the last time, and they parted for ever. "Now," said he, turning to Burnet, "the bitterness of death is indeed past." "For," adds the good old bishop, "he loved and esteemed her beyond expression."

He went to bed, slept soundly, rose early, prayed alone for two or three hours. He then drank some tea and sherry, and wound up his watch, and said now he was done with time, and was going to eternity. He asked how much he should give the executioner, and on being told ten guineas, said smilingly, it was a pretty thing to give a fee to have his head cut off. Tillotson and Burnet accompanied him in the coach to the place of execution, Lincoln's Inn-fields. There were great crowds in the streets. Some wept, others insulted. He said he hoped he should quickly see a much better assembly. When he ascended the scaffold, he turned to the sheriff and delivered his paper. He protested he had always been far from any designs against the king's life or government. He prayed God would preserve both, and the Protestant religion. He wished all Protestants might love one another, and not make way for Popery by their animosities. He then prayed, and laying his head upon the block, it was severed from his body at two strokes.

In 1688, when the Duke of York had become James the Second, when his tyranny and bigotry had disgusted the nation, when his nearest and dearest had deserted and fled, when William Prince of Orange had landed, and was marching upon London in hostile array, he called a council of a few nobles at the palace, and implored their advice in this great emergency. Turning to the Earl of Bedford he said: "My lord, you are a good man and have great influence; you can do much for me at this time." "I am an old man," was the reply; "and can do but little; I once had a son, who could now have been very serviceable to your majesty." The king was struck dumb, and made no reply.

\* It must be remembered, that at this period the Tory party were preaching, on all sides, the doctrine of non-resistance, and "the right divine of kings to govern wrong."